A Review of the Pakistani Government's "White Paper": *Qādiyāniyyat— A Grave Threat to Islam*

Replies to Some Allegations

(17)

A Great Victory for Aḥmadiyyat

as Evidenced by the Un-Islamic Decision—Based on Numerical Majority—on the Distinction Between Truth and Falsehood

An English translation of
the Friday sermon delivered by
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV[rta]
on May 17, 1985
at the Faḍl Mosque, London

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An English translation of the Friday sermon delivered in Urdu by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV (*raḥmatullāh ʻalaih*), *on May 17, 1985, at the Faḍl Mosque, London.*

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In the Name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful

Preface

A perfect example of the cruel treatment of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at by the government of Pakistan is the White Paper. This document, published by the government of Pakistan under the title *Qādiyā-niyyat—A Grave Threat to Islam*, was written in support of the federal ordinance dated April 26, 1984.

By publishing the White Paper, this 'Islamic Republic' has set aside all Islamic values and has done away with many basic human rights including religious social freedoms of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at. Using the White Paper as a crutch, the government of Pakistan claims the beliefs of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at compel it to impose restrictions upon the Aḥmadī Muslims.

As far as the allegations and accusations made in the White Paper are concerned, they are a repetition of the same baseless allegations and accusations that the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at has responded to in the past on the basis of the Holy Qur'an and the Aḥādīth.

Since much of our literature is currently being confiscated by the government of Pakistan, sincere seekers of truth may have difficulty finding the answers. This series of Friday sermons present the response to these allegations by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV[rta], the then Imam of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at, to these allegations.

This response to the White Paper was first published in Urdu in 1985 and the English translation is being published now. This sermon was delivered on May 17, 1985 at the Faḍl Mosque, London; it deals with the status of the decision by a numerical majority under Islamic law.

The translation of this Friday sermon was done by Dr. Nasim Rehmatullah. The translation team headed by—Munawar Ahmed Saeed, under the direction of Additional Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf London—finalized this series of Friday sermons for publication. Important contributions were made by Fouzia Shah, Karimullah Zirvi, Luqman Mahmood and several other team members. May Allah bless them all. *Āmīn*.

This book uses the following system of transliteration adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word *honour*.

ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word *thing*.

ح *ḥ*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.

خ *kh*, pronounced like the Scotch *ch* in *loch*.

ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English *th* in *that*.

ص *ṣ*, strongly articulated *s*.

ض *ḍ*, similar to the English *th* in *this*.

ط *ṭ*, strongly articulated palatal *t*.

ظ *ẓ*, strongly articulated *z*.

ع ‘, a strong guttural sound, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.

غ *gh*, a sound approached very nearly by *r* in the French *grasseye* and also the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the gargling position whilst pronouncing it.

ق *q*, a deep guttural *k* sound.

ء ’, a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for ـَـ (like *u* in *bud*); *i* for ـِـ (like *i* in *bid*); *u* for ـُـ (like *oo* in *wood*); the long vowels by *ā* for ـَا or آ (like *a* in *father*); ī for ـِى or ـِا (like *ee* in *deep*); *ai* for ـَى (like *i* in *site*); *ū* for ـُو (like *oo* in *root*): *au* for, ـَو (resembling *ou* in *sound*).

Please note that in transliterated words the letter *e* is to be pronounced as in *prey* which rhymes with *day*; however the pronunciation is flat without the element of English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian, the letter *e* is lengthened a bit more, it is transliterated as *ei* to be pronounced as *ei* in *feign* without the element of diphthong; thus کے is transliterated as *Kei*. For the nasal sound of *n*, we have used the symbol *ń*. Thus the Urdu word میں would be transliterated as *meiń*.

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

The following abbreviations have been used. Readers are urged to recite the full salutations when reading the book:

sa *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, meaning 'may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him' is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

as *'alaihis salām*, meaning 'may peace be upon him' is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

ra *raḍi-Allāho 'anhu/'anhā/'anhum,* meaning 'may Allah be pleased with him/her/them' is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] or of the Promised Messiah[as].

rta *raḥmatullāh 'alaih*, meaning 'may Allah shower His mercy upon him' is written after the names of deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] or of the Promised Messiah[as].

Please note that in referencing the Holy Qur'an, we have counted 'In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful' as the first verse of the chapter in which it appears. We pray to God that this message may reach all people who have a genuine desire to study these issues. May Allah make this a source of guidance for them. *Āmīn*.

Munir-ud-Din Shams
Additional Vakīl-ut-Taṣnīf
London, UK, April 2008

About the Author

ḤAḌRAT MIRZĀ ṬĀHIR AḤMAD[rta] was born in Qadian, India, in 1928 to Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Bashīr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra] and Ḥaḍrat Maryam Begum[ra]. He received his early schooling in Qadian. After graduating from the Aḥmadiyyah Missionary College, Rabwah with distinction, he obtained an honours degree in Arabic from Punjab University.

In 1955, he visited England for the first time with his father, who suggested that he remain behind to improve his knowledge of the English language and European social habits. He secured admission at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, where he remained for two and a half years. By the end of 1957, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad[rta] had seen most of Western Europe. He traveled extensively in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.

The experience that he gained during these years would play a crucial role later in his life, when administering his great responsibilities as Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV, the fourth Head of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at. He was

elected to this office in 1982, one day after the demise of his predecessor, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Nāṣir Aḥmad[rta].

The anti-Aḥmadiyyah ordinance of April 1984, promulgated by General Zia-ul-Haq, compelled Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad[rta] to leave Pakistan. He decided to migrate to England where he established his transitory base in exile. Within a few years, he trained and organised thousands of volunteers to help him discharge his global responsibilities. Of all his achievements in England, MTA (Muslim Television Aḥmadiyyah) international is one of the greatest. Through MTA international, numerous training programs are televised twenty-four hours a day. His activities since departure from Pakistan helped proliferate and spread the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at to over 150 countries of the world.

Apart from being a religious leader, he was also a homeopathic physician, a prolific writer, a gifted poet, and a sportsman.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad[rta] passed away on April 19, 2003 at the age of 74. He is succeeded by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad [may Allah be his help], the present Head of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at.

A Great Victory for Ahmadiyyat

After reciting *tashahhud*, *ta'awwudh*, and *sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, Ḥuḍūr[rta] recited the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:[1]

أَفَغَيْرَ اللّٰهِ أَبْتَغِيْ حَكَمًا وَّهُوَ الَّذِيٓ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُمُ
الْكِتٰبَ مُفَصَّلًا ۚ وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰتَيْنٰهُمُ الْكِتٰبَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ أَنَّهٗ
مُنَزَّلٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِيْنَ ۝

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَّعَدْلًا ۚ لَا مُبَدِّلَ لِكَلِمٰتِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ
السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ ۝

وَإِنْ تُطِعْ أَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يُضِلُّوْكَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ ۚ
إِنْ يَّتَّبِعُوْنَ إِلَّا الظَّنَّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَخْرُصُوْنَ ۝

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ مَنْ يَّضِلُّ عَنْ سَبِيْلِهٖ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ
بِالْمُهْتَدِيْنَ ۝

Ḥuḍūr[rta] said:

These verses mean that [The Holy Prophet[sa] is commanded to say]: 'Can I turn to anyone besides Allah as the Judge? That is, can I seek someone other than God to

1. (*al-An'ām*, 6:115–118)

decide, when it is He Who has revealed to you the Book, clearly explained?' And those to whom We gave the Book know that it has been sent down from your Lord (i.e. the Lord of Muḥammad[sa]) with truth; so, O ye people, be not of those who doubt. And the Word of your Lord has reached its perfection in truth and justice. Nobody has the power to change these words and therefore, these words will never be changed. And God is All-Seeing and All-Knowing.

Concerning the majority, Allah says:

وَاِنْ تُطِعْ اَكْثَرَ مَنْ فِي الْاَرْضِ يُضِلُّوْكَ عَنْ سَبِيْلِ اللّٰهِ

And if you obey the majority of those on earth, they will lead thee astray from Allah's way.

[God says] they follow nothing but conjecture, and they do nothing but make excuses and follow superstition. O Prophet[sa], your Lord knows best those who have gone astray from His way, and He knows best those who are righteous.

Baseless Propaganda About the Numerical Majority

These and many other verses of the Holy Qur'an state very clearly that when distinguishing right from wrong or truth from falsehood, the majority decision is meaningless. More often than not, the majority is wrong; therefore, most of the time when following the majority one is led astray. To

believe something just because it is what the majority believes is a grave mistake, for there are other ways to distinguish between right and wrong.

However, at the end of the White Paper published by the government of Pakistan, it proudly claimed and publicised to the world that: 'We have a majority in numbers against Aḥmadiyyah Jamā'at—a majority of the general public, and a majority in the National Assembly. In fact, the consensus to declare Aḥmadīs non-Muslims has thus resolved a hundred year old issue once and for all. The fact that we all agree proves that Aḥmadīs are wrong and so we need no other proof.'

A Majority in Numbers and the 'Great Multitude'

The fact is that agreement on a matter by both the people and the *ulema* [religious scholars] does not make it the 'Great Multitude' which had been mentioned by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

Renowned *ulema* and past Islamic elders from Ḥaḍrat 'Alī[ra] to the present time have openly expressed the view that, as far as the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] on the subject of 'Great Multitude' are concerned, it is incorrect to say that 'Great Multitude' means the opinion of a majority of the *ulema* and general population. It is wrong to think that this point of view concerning the majority is necessarily correct. On the contrary, Ḥaḍrat

'Alī[ra] said, 'if you are alone but righteous then you are the only one worthy of being followed.' [In this case] the rest of the majority should be ignored. Ḥaḍrat Imam Rāzī, Ḥaḍrat Ibn-e-Taymiyyah, Ḥaḍrat Imam Ibn-e-Qayyim and many other godly scholars have raised this issue one after another, and have asserted that a numerical majority plays no role in discerning truth. They declare without hesitation that if an individual is alone but is on the right path, then he alone is worthy of being considered the 'Great Multitude' and there can be no other 'Great Multitude.' Despite this, the opponents of Aḥmadiyyat claim that due to their majority in numbers and the fact that the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at is a mere minority, a grand consensus has been reached which has been stamped by the seal of approval of Islam. This is absolutely wrong.

Decision of the Assembly Does Not Bear the Stamp of Sharī'ah

...I want to now draw your attention to the fact that another White Paper has also been published by the current government, but against the same National Assembly of whose majority decision they are proud of! What does the current government think about the members of the National Assembly whose united decision is being presented as bearing the seal of *sharī'ah*? To read the stories about them in the White Paper is amazing. It has been

divided into three parts according to different subjects. The first part is about Mr. Zulfiqār 'Alī Bhutto and his favourite ministers. In it, it speaks of the character, Islamic standings, as well as morality and actions of each of them and discusses them name by name. It is a horrifying story. I cannot present the details of the way the administration (the same administration that has published the White Paper against us) has elaborately presented allegations regarding the Islamic status of the people who are credited with this great accomplishment against Aḥmadiyyat. They are very embarrassing to read, but because of necessity, I will have to present you a few examples.

Acts Contrary to Decency and Dignity

I do not want to delve into the allegations where names are mentioned because most of the named people are still alive. If I give out these allegations along with the names then I would myself become a part of the mischief. I fundamentally disagree with this approach. I do not approve of any government in the world to involve itself in the character assassination of its own citizens. If these people—the current administration—had any decency and regard for human values, they would have brought those people before fair and unbiased courts. There should have been indictments against the accused and then the decisions of the courts should have been presented to the world. It is

true that in some instances, courts' decisions become influenced by outside pressure and lose their significance. However, this is a procedure which does find some credibility in the civilised world.

I am completely opposed to the practice of the present government of starting a character assassination campaign and fabricating heinous crimes against its citizens. Therefore, I will not read the details of the accusations. However, I would like to mention that in this part of the White Paper, along with Bhutto, Maulavī Kauthar Niāzī (former Minister of Ḥajj, Welfare Fund, Charitable Fund, and Religious Affairs) is on top of the list. Mumtāz Bhutto—Bhutto's cousin from his paternal uncle's side—who is still alive, is on the list as well. Ghulām Muṣtafā Khar, who is also alive, appears prominently on this list. The name of Ṣādiq Ḥussain Qureshī is also presented with special significance. Then there are Naṣrullāh Khān Khatak, 'Abdul Waḥīd Katpar, and Jām Ṣādiq 'Alī. These are the people who have been named and they are accused of atrocious and horrific crimes. When one gains control of the government, it is one's duty to take any accusations of criminal behaviour to the courts, bring indictments and then act according to the decisions of the court. Allegations and accusations are the traits of the weak who find themselves helpless because they have no control of the government. They are the ones who take out their frustrations and anger by way of accusations and sarcasm. It is not how governments should act.

Therefore, the current administration should have, with dignity, gone to the courts with indictments and then should have acted upon the decisions of the courts. Yet, as far as the current government is concerned, they firmly believe that the 1974 National Assembly comprised of individuals with atrocious and horrific character who should have no right to be the representatives of Islam.

The 'Pious' Deeds of the So-Called Majority

As far as the Peoples Party is concerned, they were in the majority in the National Assembly. The pictures that have been painted of its federal ministers, provincial ministers, members of national and provincial assemblies—without naming any names—is hard to believe. Since no individual is being named here, I do not feel hesitant to describe some of these allegations to you. The nature of the allegations is such that according to Islamic *sharī'ah*, the perpetrator and advertisers of these allegations should receive a minimum sentence of eighty lashes. If the current government is proclaiming to support the Islamic *sharī'ah*, it needs to impose the *sharī'ah* upon itself before imposing it on others. If an individual is accused of the crimes mentioned in their White Paper, then, unless four witnesses testify to the accuracy of the accusations and the accusations are duly confirmed, as an Islamic government it is under obligation to impose a sentence of eighty lashes on the accusers. In the

eyes of the current government, the religious status of the members of the Peoples Party is described as follows:

> They are addicted to alcohol and adultery and, according to some sources, are involved in the damning habits of (an obscene word omitted). On a return flight with the delegation he asked the air hostess for two bottles of whisky and when the air hostess provided him with the bottles he attempted to have his way with her. However, the air hostess rejected his advances. (White Paper, Bhutto ka Daur-e-Ḥukūmat, vol. 3, p. 182)

Such are the ways of the prominent leaders of the National Assembly who declared Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at to be non-Muslim and this is the same declaration that the current government is proudly presenting to the world.

About another individual... it is stated:

> He accumulated wealth through illegal means after the 1970 elections and his special confidant is a dangerous smuggler. (White Paper, Bhutto ka Daur-e-Ḥukūmat, vol. 3, p. 183)

About a different individual... it is stated:

> Since his youth, open sexual relationships have been the hallmark of his character. He is rapidly moving towards sexual perversion. He marries women with great shamelessness and then divorces them to adorn the houses of ill fame.

Just imagine, the White Paper issued by this government has shamelessly embarked on an audacious and immoral act of character assassination against its own citizens. The statement about divorced women and how they were left to adorn the houses of ill fame is a disgusting and horrific accusation. Under a truly Islamic government the accusers would deserve a punishment of eighty lashes each. Irrespective of the facts, they [the government of Pakistan] would not have published these things unless they believed them to be true, we have no qualms about what they believe to be true or the many things that have been brought to their attention. We only want to tell them that this is the opinion that you yourselves hold about the Islamic status of the members of the National Assembly which declared the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at as non-Muslim—a declaration which you hail as the resolution of the hundred year old issue.

That is not all. It is further stated that these people were murderers and supporters of murderers. It is stated that one individual not only assisted murderers but was also involved in getting the cases against them dismissed. Additionally, it is stated about him that he was involved in obtaining illegal licenses for handguns and other firearms. It is written that he also stole from the poor, widows, and orphans by exerting his influence in private courts. He is said to have also extorted huge sums of money from contractors and industrialists, and then disrupted their work

by putting roadblocks in their way. He is also written about as being a drunkard, criminal, extortionist and pirate.

The people whose accounts I am presenting belong to the majority People's Party. Such is the picture that has been painted about them in the White Paper.

Conduct of the Opposition Party

As far as the members of the Opposition are concerned, one may assume that they might have been spared such accusations. But, in the opinion of the current government, the members of the Opposition were just as rotten as the members of the People's Party. In the same White Paper that is being mentioned above, the characters of some members of the Opposition are also presented. It is stated about one of them:

> Addicted to bragging and boasting, he considers himself to be the only one equivalent in leadership to the Prime Minister. He is without any principles and conscience. Unfortunately, due to a lack of well educated people in our nation, he has attained a more important position at the national level than his real worth. (Bhutto ka Daur-e-Ḥukūmat, vol. 3, p. 184)

That is to say that the condition of the Majority and Minority are the same. There is such a shortage of qualified people that, though the Majority Party is corrupt, there are no qualified people left in the Minority Party either. This,

in turn, has led to a rise on the national stage of these delinquent characters.

About another member of the Opposition, it is written:

> His rebellious and his covert activities are well known. Nobody dare say anything without facing reprisals. He is involved in all kinds of illegal and illicit activities.

About still another member of the Opposition, it is written:

> Financially weak, greedy, boastful and covetous of cheap publicity, he has established illegitimate sexual relations with… [the ellipsis is given to suggest that the name of a specific person is being omitted.] (Bhutto ka Daur-e-Ḥukūmat, vol. 3, p. 185)

One is amazed at the language used by these people. Normally, one would expect such words to be used by *maulavīs*. For a government to use such language in a White Paper bearing the stamp of an official document is mind-boggling. It shows what their own character is, the criteria they use in judging others, the respect they give to the *sharī'ah*, and how they play dirty games in the name of the *sharī'ah*.

It is amazing that the authors of the White Paper consider these Assembly members to be of such depraved and evil character, that they are advertising their ill deeds so widely; and yet, they feel so proud that God Almighty granted them the ability to solve a hundred year old problem, as if they are saying that 'they achieved a grand success

in making a decision, under *sharī'ah*, which the most eminent scholars could not achieve.'

About another member of the Opposition it is written that he has committed murders for trivial reasons. Other accusations [made against the members of the Opposition party] are that they are: holders of illegitimate permits and agencies, smugglers, abusers of custom officers [no action has been taken by the custom officers involved], and abusers of women.

The accusations abound. The Assembly is a representative of the people. If the character of the members of the Assembly are so depraved, one wonders what they believe to be the character of the nation?

How deplorable is the character of the government! It is presenting to the world a decision by its Assembly—while forgetting that it had published another White Paper about the same Assembly.

Chip Off the Old Block

That is not all. Some members of the Assembly are described as agents of foreign powers, being involved in nefarious activities and schemes against the country, opportunists, and drunkards. The government describes these people as the lowest of the low, yet very proudly claims that they have declared Aḥmadīs to be non-

Muslims and that their decision is in accordance with the *sharī'ah* because they constitute a 'Great Multitude'.

اِنَّالِلّٰهِ وَاِنَّااِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُوْن۔
'*Innā Lillāhi* Wa *Innā Ileihi Rāji'ūn.*'

Irrespective of whether their accusations are right or wrong, when they themselves have brought up such accusations, how can they still call the decision a valid consensus? They should have been ashamed of calling these criminals as representing the faith of the Holy Prophet[sa]. They should have learnt a lesson from Imam Bukhārī[rta].

An Example from the Lovers of the Holy Prophet[sa]

It is written about Ḥaḍrat Imām Bukhārī[rta] that he was on a journey in a boat with a large sum of gold coins in a bag. Another person on the boat, who was watching him closely, had obtained information about how much the bag contained. When the journey began, this person shouted that his bag of gold coins was missing and stolen, and it contained so many gold coins. The captain of the boat ordered a search. No bag of gold coins was found. Later, that man approached Ḥaḍrat Imām Bukhārī[rta] and confessed that he had tried to acquire his bag of gold coins illegally but was curious as to what happened to the bag. Ḥaḍrat Imām Bukhārī[rta] said that he threw it in the river. He said that he collected and safeguarded the sayings of the Holy Prophet

Muḥammad[sa] and he did not feel that even a false allegation should be made against him, as it would undermine his legitimacy. A custodian of the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] should be entirely blameless. What is the worth of gold coins?

Such were the people who truly loved the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]. He [Ḥaḍrat Imām Bukhārī[rta]] did not hesitate for a minute to sink into the river his entire belongings which he had accumulated over his lifetime, as he could not permit that any question be raised about the validity of the sayings of the Holy Prophet[sa] or the character of a servant of the Holy Prophet[sa].

Height of Shamelessness and Immorality

The present government of Pakistan feels no shame in exposing the members of the National Assembly by writing such gory details about them. In other countries even if 1/100th of such accusations are made, they would resign from their seats. In the USA, when the Watergate episode was exposed, there was great hue and cry. People were jailed and the President had to resign. This was not an Islamic state but these people showed some element of honour and decency. But, look at the character of a government which calls itself Islamic. After having exposed these people, this government calls them, God forbid,

true servants of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] for declaring Aḥmadīs as non-Muslim!

The government could have found some excuse for presenting their decision if it had said that: 'We are evil-minded and have brought about false allegations'. But, even if they were pious and holy, their decision to call Aḥmadīs as non-Muslim would be invalid under the *sharī'ah*, because matters dealing with faith are not decided in this manner.

The Validity of the So-Called Majority in the Eyes of the Ulema

What the National Assembly did in 1974 is a shining proof of the truth of Aḥmadiyyat. It is rare to find such a glorious sign as I will discuss later. Let me first put forth what the *ulema* of these people have said about the so-called majority.

Syed 'Aṭā'ullāh Shāh Bukhārī said:

> We will not subjugate ourselves to the so-called majority as we know them to be wrong. (*Swāneḥ Ḥayāt-e-Bukhārī*, p. 11, *Akhbār Zamzam*, Lahore, April 30, 1939).

The leader of Deobandī sect Maulavī Ashraf 'Alī Thānwī says:

> In our times democracy is being touted as superior to personal leadership. What the majority says goes.

> One of my friends made a very fine point.... (*Monthly al-Balāgh*, Karachi, July 1976. p. 59)

Indeed the point he made is very fine, but it would be a surprise if any *maulavī* comprehended it. Nevertheless, the Maulavī Ṣāḥib being quoted had the nobility of hearing a valid point and passing it on. The fine point mentioned by his friend is as follows.

> He said that even if we understand the meaning of Great Multitude to mean a simple majority, it is still not applicable to all times and ages. It refers to the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] and the three centuries that passed after him. (*Ibid.*)

That is to say, the 'Great Multitude' mentioned by the Holy Prophet[sa] refers to the majority of the Muslims during the time which, according to the Holy Prophet[sa], was the period of righteousness, truthfulness, and light. The Holy Prophet[sa] himself declared it to be the best of times. That is to say, his time and the time of the next two generations of Muslims. These three are the periods of light. After that darkness was destined to prevail.

The quotation continues:

> In those times a simple majority was the Great Multitude. In other times:
>
> ثُمَّ يَفْشُوالْكَذِبُ
>
> 'then falsehood would spread'

> indicates a simple majority would not be the Great Multitude because most people in these times would be involved in mischief. (*Ibid.*)

In other words the best of times does not refer to the period in which, according to the Holy Prophet[sa] himself, falsehood would spread. This is a very valid and cogent point, which cannot be questioned. The Holy Prophet[sa] did talk about the 'Great Multitude', but at the same time, he also pointed out that the best of times is limited to three periods or generations. After that, falsehood and spiritual darkness would start spreading. To draw a valid conclusion from the opinions of the masses during this period is a baseless attempt.

The quotation continues:

> This was an important and valid point expressed by my friend and I concur with it. (*Ibid.*)

Prophecy About the Righteous Sect

This point [about the time of the 'Great Multitude' being limited to the time of the Holy Prophet[sa] and the three generations after him] is indeed valid and useful. But, it is useful for us and not for our opponents. The majority of people that were to live during the time that the Holy

Prophet Muḥammad[sa] called the time of lying and deceit are described as the following:

عن عبد اللّٰه بن عمرو رضی اللّٰه عنهما قال قال رسول اللّٰهﷺ لیا تین علی امتی ما اتی
علی بنی اسرائیل حذ والنعل بالنعل حتی ان کان منهم من اتی امه علانیة لکان فی امتی
من یصنع ذلك و ان بنی اسرائیل تفر قت علی ثنتین وسبعین ملة و تفترق امتی علی ثلاث و
سبعین ملة کلهم فی النار الا ملة واحدة قالوا من هی یا رسول اللّٰه قال ما ا نا علیه وا صحابی

> It is related by ʻAbdullāh bin ʻAmr that the Holy Prophet[sa] said that my *ummah* [followers] will go through the same stages as Banī-Isrā'īl [people of Israel—followers of Moses[as]] did. The similarities will be very striking, like one shoe of a pair has to the other. So much so that if a person from among the Banī-Isrā'īl committed an offence against his mother, a similar unfortunate one would also be found in my *ummah*. Banī-Isrā'īl split up into seventy-two sects. My people will split up into seventy-three sects. With the exception of one sect, all others will be bound for Hell. The Companions[ra] asked as to who these righteous people or sect would be. The Holy Prophet[sa] replied that these would be the people who would truly follow him [Holy Prophet[sa]]and his Companions (*Tirmadhī*, Abwāb-ul-Īmān bābo Iftirāq-e-hādhihil Ummate, vol. 2, p. 88–89)

So the demeanour and beliefs of the righteous group would be similar to the Holy Prophet[sa] and his Companions[ra].

Definition of a Muslim According to Imam of the Wahhābīs

The *ḥadīth* narrated above is significant because the present regime in Pakistan belongs to *Wahhābī* [also called *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth*] Group. The Imām of this group who is also considered a reformer of the 12th century, Ḥaḍrat Imām Muḥammad Bin 'Abdul Wahhāb, was a renowned holy man. He wrote, referring to the previously quoted *ḥadīth,* as follows:

ستفترق هذه الامة على ثلاث و سبعين فرقة كلهافىالنار الاواحدة

> That my Ummah will be divided into seventy three sects, all of them will be in fire, except one.
>
> Then he says:
>
> فهذه المسئلة اجل المسا ئل
>
> This point is one of the most significant points.
>
> Then he continues:
>
> فمن فهمها فهو الفقيه ومن عمل بها فهوالمسلم
>
> People of understanding should know that the meaning of this statement is that the one sect that is bound for Heaven is the one that is called Muslim. (*Mukhtaṣar Sīrat Rasūlullāh Ṣallallāho 'Alaihi Wa Sallam* p. 18, by Imām Muḥammad bin 'Abdul-Wahhāb, published in Cairo).

In other words, the matter of seventy-two out of seventy-three sects being hell-bound and only one deserving Paradise is so important that he who understands it is a true

scholar. Only one who acts upon this admonition alone is a Muslim, for Imam 'Abdul Wahhāb has raised this matter to the definition of a Muslim.

According to him the issue that the Holy Prophet[sa] has raised in this *ḥadīth* is so critical that a Muslim is only he who believes the prophecy which states that when the *ummah* is divided into seventy-three sects, seventy-two will be hell-bound and only one will achieve salvation.

Prophecy About a Prophecy

Ḥaḍrat Imam Mullā 'Alī Qārī, who has written a commentary on Mishkāt [a book of Aḥadīth] and who is a recognised authority in the Ḥanafī Sect, writes with reference to this *ḥadīth*:

فتلك اثنان وسبعون فرقة كلهم فى ا لناروالفرقة الناجية هم
اهل السنة البيضآء المحمد ية والطريقة النقية الاحمد ية

> These seventy-two sects, all of them will be in the fire. The righteous ones will be those who truly follow the Holy Prophet[sa] and are firmly established on the pure Aḥmadiyyah doctrine. (*Mirqātul-Mafātīḥ'-Sharaḥ Mishkāt*, vol. 1, p. 248)

Look at the understanding of this *imām*. How clearly he explains this *ḥadīth* and emphasises that the sect of Muḥammad (Muḥammadiah Sect) would be the Aḥmadiyyah sect and none other.

The Righteous Sect in the Eyes of Shī'ah Muslims

All Muslim sects accept this *ḥadīth*, but declare themselves to be the seventy-third sect. A Shī'ah leader referring to this *ḥadīth* writes:

> Shī'ah consider that the leader of the righteous, Lion of Allah, Ḥaḍrat 'Alī[ra] son of Abū Ṭālib to be the true *khalīfah* after the Holy Prophet[sa]. We also believe that from his progeny, one after another, there were eleven true *imams* and *khulafā'* (successors to the Holy Prophet[sa]) till the coming of *Imam Mahdī* in the Latter Days. But, the other seventy-two sects believe 'Abū Bakr to be the first *khalīfah*, then 'Umar, followed by 'Uthmān, followed by 'Alī (on them be peace).

After mentioning other differences he goes on to say:

> To sum up: in all matters—whether of a fundamental nature or relating to details—the Shī'ah sect stands out as different from others. It cannot be joined with them in any way, because of the significant differences on fundamental matters as well as in details. For this reason, all Islamic sects oppose Shī'ahs. But, according to the above-mentioned *ḥadīth*, this sect is righteous and bound for Heaven. (*Fatāwā Ḥā'irī*, vol. 2, Az Ifādāt-e-'Āliyah Ḥujjatil-Islam Wal-Muslimīn Ṣadril Mufassirīn Sulṭānil-Muḥadditīn Muḥyil Millati Wad-Dīn Ra'īsish-Sharī'ati Madārish-Sharī'te Nabāḍe Dahr Ḥakīmil-Ummatin-Nājiyyah Sarkāre Sharī'at Madār Shamsil-'Ulamā' 'Allāmah Sayyed al-Ḥā'irī Ṣāḥib Qiblah Mujtahidul 'Aṣri Wazzamān, edition. 3, part. 2, pp. 5–6)

The Heaven-Bound Sect will be in the Minority

Till yesterday, these people believed this *ḥadīth* to be true. Their only contention was who amongst them was the righteous sect or the seventy-third sect as mentioned in the *ḥadīth*.

A well-known organ of Jamā'at-e-Islāmī, *Tarjamān-ul-Qur'an*, accepts this *ḥadīth* and goes on to say:

> In Islam it is not considered that if a majority agrees on something it makes it right and valid. This majority is not a Great Multitude. For a crowd of people or a group of *maulavīs* to come together on an issue does not make it right… this meaning is amplified and supported by the *ḥadīth* narrated by Ḥaḍrat 'Abdullāh Bin 'Umar[ra]: 'Banī-Isrā'īl was split up into seventy-two sects. My people will split up into seventy-three sects. All of them will be Hell-bound except one. People asked him who these people would be. The Holy Prophet[sa] said that 'they would follow my way and the way of my Companions.'

Further it is written in *Tarjamān-ul-Qur'an*:

> This sect will not be in a majority nor will it claim that majority is a proof of validity or of being on the right. It would be one of the seventy-three sects, and in this world they would be like outsiders and different. As it was said:
>
> بدء الاسلام غريبا وسيعودغريبا كما بدء فطو بى للغربآء
>
> 'Islam started in poverty and will once again revert to poverty. So glad tidings to the poor'.

It is our sect which is different and we are the outsiders. Allah be praised that He has caused our enemies to say things in our favour. Allah the Almighty caused those who curse us to use phrases which really entitle us to the mercy of Allah. They had to admit and confirm for us the honour destined for us. As the Holy Prophet[sa] had stated, Islam started with the poor and will be poor again:

فطوبی للغربآء

Therefore, it is a good news for the poor, i.e., those who had to leave their homes and migrate for the sake of Islam and would therefore be called poor.

Further in this article in *Tarjamān-ul-Qur'an* it is written:

> In this *ḥadīth* there is no support for the contention of those people who consider themselves the righteous sect under the protection of Allah... because they are in majority. The *ḥadīth* mentions two characteristics of this *Jamā'at*. One, they would be in their ways similar to the Holy Prophet[sa] and his Companions. Second, they would be a very small minority. (*Tarjamān-ul Qur'an* September, October. 1945, vol. 27, no. 3–4, pp. 175–176 compiled by *Syed Abul A'lā Maudūdī*)

The Calamity that Hit Pakistan

You must remember this well. The Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] prophesised that his *ummah* will split up into seventy-two sects and there will appear a seventy-third *Jamā'at* which will be on the right path. This means the other

seventy-two will be bound for the fire in Hell. There is only one group that will be righteous and that would be a Jamā'at.

Until recently, all our foes believed in this *ḥadīth*. There was no exception. On September 7, 1974, the calamity that hit Pakistan was that our enemies, in their malicious attempt to malign and disgrace Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at, also maligned, God forbid, the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]. By their words and actions, they claimed that this *ḥadīth* was not true and whatever our holy men had said in the past about this *ḥadīth* was also untrue. According to them, the reverse is true. Seventy-two sects are right and one is wrong. They put forth this opinion very proudly and the present government also emphasizes it in the White Paper. They go against the words of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] with great impunity despite repeated warnings by the Imām of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at to refrain from this and not to invite the wrath of Allah by going against the words of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]. They have in essence revolted against the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] and are therefore non-Muslim themselves. By dint of their ill-formed majority, they continue to demand increasing punitive measures against the Aḥmadīs.

Spite and Malice of the Opponents of Aḥmadiyyat

The opponents of Aḥmadiyyat cannot vilify Aḥmadīs unless they defy this *ḥadīth*. One would note that earlier in

history they said the same thing. Maulavī Akhtar 'Alī Khān, son of Maulavī Ẓafar 'Alī Khān, said the following very proudly in 1952:

> Our action has resulted in a consensus of opinion for the second time in the last thirteen hundred years. Today, the seventy-two sects are united against Mirzā of Qadian. Ḥanafī, Wahhābī, Deobandī, Brailavī, Shī'ah, Sunnī, Aḥl-e-Ḥadīth and all their *ulema* and scholars have united in demanding that Mirzaīs are non-Muslim and should be called a non-Muslim minority. (*Newspaper Zamīńdār*, Nov. 5, 1952 p. 2, col. 6)

God Has His Own Ways of Dealing with Such People

In 1974, when the National Assembly of Pakistan carried out this heinous act of declaring the Aḥmadīs non-Muslim, they proudly presented the fact of the unity of the seventy-two sects in reaching this decision, not realizing that their own statements would go against them. God has His own ways. As the Holy Qur'an says:[2]

> يُخٰدِعُوْنَ اللّٰهَ وَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۚ وَمَا يَخْدَعُوْنَ اِلَّآ اَنْفُسَهُمْ . . .
>
> They would deceive Allah and those who believe, but they deceive none but themselves…

The statement in the newspaper *Nawā-e-Waqt*, on Oct. 6, 1974, p. 4, bears this out. We read:

2. (*al-Baqarah*, 2:10)

> In the entire history of Islam, we have never seen such unity among the Muslims. In this unity we have all the *ulema*, scholars, political leaders and the 'holy men' of the various groups who have given their stamp of approval of this decision. With the exception of the Qādiānī sect, all the seventy-two sects generally known amongst the Muslims have willingly united in this decision. (*Nawā-e-Waqt*, Oct. 6, 1974, p. 4)

The decree of Allah is such that by citing the concept of seventy-two sects on one side, and Aḥmadiyyat as the only one on the other side, they have, in essence, condemned themselves according to the *ḥadīth* cited earlier. By God, if they are seventy-two and we are one, then the proclamation of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] will hold true no matter what they do. There is no one who can over-ride the proclamation of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

Remember that Sept. 7, 1974 will go down in history as a day of infamy for our opponents. For Aḥmadiyyat, it was the day that new life was breathed into it. Having united in this decision, our opponents fulfilled the *ḥadīth* and the prophecy of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

By joining in this decision, you [the Government of Pakistan] have determined with your own hands that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet[sa] has been fulfilled. Since you belied the decision of the Holy Prophet[sa], the prophecy was fulfilled with greater glory. Your behaviour proves that you

are liars, because you reached a conclusion which is totally at odds with the decision of the Holy Prophet[sa].

The Beginning of a Great Victory

In summary, this is your majority and the status of your majority. We do not care at all for that majority which the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa] did not care for. You have tried to break our ties with the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa], but through your actions, our ties have become permanently cemented to the Holy Prophet[sa]. If, God forbid, you are right and the Holy Prophet[sa] is wrong, we would much rather side with the Holy Prophet[sa] than you. You may call us liars, but we are tied to the Holy Prophet[sa]. If you will call us truthful, then of course that is what we are. Your own actions have put you in a quagmire and you have no way out. **The day that all of you, without exception, united to declare Aḥmadīs non-Muslim—defying the writings of your elders—was the day that God began the process for the great victory of Aḥmadiyyat.** We are pleased with that.

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍوَّآلِ مُحَمَّدٍوَّبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ اِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ

Allāh humma ṣalle 'alā Muḥammadin wa āle Muḥammadin wa bārik wa sallim innaka Ḥamīdum Majīd.[3]

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3. Bless, O Allah Muḥammad and the progeny of Muḥammad and grant them prosperity and security. Your are indeed the Praiseworthy, the Glorious.

Glossary of Important Terms

Allah—Allah is the personal name of God in Islam. To show proper reverence to Him, Muslims often add *Ta'ālā*, 'the Most High', when saying His Holy name.

Aḥmadī Muslim or Aḥmadī—A member of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Community.

Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at—(Also Aḥmadiyyah) The Community of Muslims who accept the claims of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad[as] of Qadian as the Promised Messiah and Mahdī. The Jamā'at established by Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad[as], now lead by his fifth *Khalīfah*, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad [may Allah be his help].

Ḥadīth—A saying of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa]. The plural is *aḥādīth*.

Ḥaḍrat—A term of respect used for a person of established righteousness and piety.

Holy Prophet[sa]—A term used exclusively for Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad[sa], the Prophet of Islam.

Holy Qur'an—The Book sent by Allah for the guidance of mankind. It was revealed to the Holy Prophet[sa] over a period of 23 years.

Ḥuḍūr—Your Holiness; His Holiness.

Imam—The Arabic word for a leader. The head of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at is also referred to as the *Imam*.

Jamā'at—*Jamā'at* means community. Although the word *Jamā'at* itself may refer to any community, in this book, *Jamā'at* specifically refers to the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at.

Khalīfatul Masīḥ II—Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ II (1889–1965), Mirzā Bashīr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad[ra]. He is also called Muṣleḥ-e-Mau'ūd (the Promised Reformer) because he was born in accordance with the prophecy made by the Promised Messiah[as] in 1886 regarding the birth of a righteous son who would be endowed with special abilities, attributes, and powers.

Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV—Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV, Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad[rta] (1928–2003) was the fourth successor and a grandson of the Promised Messiah[as], the Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad.

Mahdī— 'The Guided One'. This is the title given by the Holy Prophet[sa] to the awaited Reformer of Latter Days.

Maulavī, Mullā or Maulānā—A Muslim religious cleric.

Promised Messiah—The Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Jamā'at, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad[as] of Qadian, India, who made his claim in fulfilment of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet[sa] regarding the coming of a Mahdī and Messiah from among the Muslims.

Ṣāḥib—A term of respect, similar to the diversity of English terms like *mister* or *sir*.

Sunnah—Traditions/Practices of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad[sa].

Sūrah—Arabic word for designating the chapters of the Holy Qur'an.

Ulema—A class of Muslim scholars.

Ummah—The larger community of Muslims.